HERE COMES SOME PRAISE OF THE SUBWAY AT LAST

By DAN CAREY.

THE most thrilling thing in New York, and probably the least appreciated, is the subway system. It is always the case that residents of any city are least appreciative of the wonders of their own home town. Who goes to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, to the Aquarium, the Botanical Gardens or the Museum of Natural History? Why, visitors, of course; honeymooners principally. It is the same way everywhere. Down in Atlanta we have the United States penitentiary. It is a wonderful institution, but more New Yorkers than Atlantans have seen the inside of it. The workings of the place are particularly familiar to the over-enthusiastic coin collectors of the financial district.

As a matter of fact, our subway ride was forced upon us by the courtesy of one of the conductors, who, by the way, for some reason or other are called guards. We have always found the subway conductors to be courteous, polite and attentive. If they chance to observe you running breathlessly to catch a train they will use every endeavor to close the door before you can get in, thus showing consideration for the other passengers whose discomfort you intended to increase by crowding in among them.

If you ask to be directed to a certain place in the city they will uniformly misdirect you and let you off at a station five or ten blocks from where you wish to go, thus giving you an opportunity to walk along the streets and observe the wonders and beauties of the city. Sometimes they will not answer at all, but respond merely by drawing all the lines of their faces down tight and glaring at you, thus indicating, without being so discourteous as to say so, that you should not have asked the question at all.

It is positively sickening the way New Yorkers are continually panning the subway conductors. Instead they ought to be acclaiming them as the one great force that is contributing to the humility of the people. Why, it is easily imaginable that without the influence of the subway conductors New Yorkers would become so proud, so arrogant, so overbearing that they would be absolutely insufferable. As it is, a man comes from his office puffed up with pride over his successes of the day, with the sycophancies of his clerks ringing pleasantly in his ears, absolutely in love with his own charming personality, haughty in spirit, disdainful in mind, contemptuous in attitude.

In the subway he is greeted with a snarl; a guttural voice, quivering with scorn, says, "Watch your step!" Then he becomes a human sardine. He is punched in the ribs, poked in the back of the neck with an umbrella, his feet are trod upon, he drops a package and can't pick it up; he is pushed and shoved and pummelled and bumped until he is a changed man. When he finally has the "Go on! Get off if this is your station!" snapped at him he has learned the truth of what Tom Moore wrote:

"Humility, that low, sweet root
From which all heavenly virtues shoot."

He is then in the proper frame of mind to embrace his wife, kiss the babies, compliment the dinner and thank heaven for a home to rest in.

For all of which he owes thanks to the subway conductor.

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WELL, we were saying it was this courtesy which caused us to take a ride on the subway. We had an engagement on Ninth avenue and decided to take the Seventh avenue subway and walk the two long blocks. We had an idea that we could connect at Rector street, so we asked the conductor of the first train that came along if his outfit went up Seventh avenue.

"Where do you want to get off?" he asked.

"At Seventh avenue and Twenty-third street," we replied.

"Hurry up. Get on. Watch your step," he said.

He immediately closed the door and the train started up Broadway. After about three stations we grew suspicious. It took a couple of stations more before we could summon sufficient courage to speak to the conductor because we had no way of escaping in case he grew angry or became violent.

"Isn't this the Broadway subway?" we finally asked timidly.

"Yes," he answered, glaring at us.

"But I asked for the Seventh avenue subway."

"It's only three or four blocks over to Seventh avenue and Twenty-third street," he said.

We indicated in a hurt tone that we felt ourself deceived, that we had no business at Seventh avenue and Twenty-third street and had intended merely using that as an alighting point, that our ultimate destination was Ninth avenue. He listened with a bored air. It may be interesting to New Yorkers to learn that he did not strike us or even attempt to do so. He merely remarked:

"Well, you can get there by taking a surface car at Twenty-third street, or you can ride with me to Times square and take a Seventh avenue subway back, or you can walk. Two blocks more will not hurt you."

We mentally admitted the truth of what he said and dropped the subject.

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SO we decided not to go to Ninth avenue at all, but to take advantage of the opportunity to do something we have always had a secret longing to do, which was to ride to the end of a subway line and see where the thing stopped. We determined to go all the way.

Brother Dickey, down in Atlanta, had a story about an "all de way man." The old man was the friend of Frank L. Stanton, the poet, who, by the way, is the oldest columnist in the United States. He has been turning out the "Just From Georgia" column for the *Atlanta Constitution* for thirty years or more. Brother Dickey, a feeble, one-eyed negro, who was also another one of these coin collectors, had a number of friends to visit every day and among these was Mr. Stanton, who made the sayings of Brother Dickey famous in Georgia.

One fall, when the air began to get crisp, we donated a discarded coat and vest to Brother Dickey. The next time we saw him he had them on.

"Look here, honey," he said, "is yo' er all de way man or des a part er de way man?"

"What do you mean by an all the way man, Brother Dickey?" we inquired.

"Well, it's like dis. Ef I starts out to car'y er bucket er water frum here ter Savannah and des gets as far as Macon den I'm a part de way man; but ef I starts out to car'y er bucket er water frum here ter Savannah and gits dar wid de water in de bucket, den I done 'complish my purpose and I'm er all de way man."

"Well what in the world has that got to do with me, Brother Dickey?" we inquired, although we knew from experience that we would be included in the climax because we had been too often and too systematically victimized by Brother Dickey not to have learned that whenever the old man spoke in parables he spoke with a very definite object in view.

"It's done come to my mind," responded our aged friend, "dat yo' has a chance ter show me dat yo's er all de way man."

"How?"

"Well yo' done gimme de coat and ves', so yo' done gone part de way, and now ef I des had de pants, why den——," and the old man concluded with a hearty chuckle, after which he reached in his coat pocket for some crumbs of tobacco to fill his corn cob pipe, and changed the subject. Having made his point he was willing to talk of other things.

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UNFORTUNATELY the subway we were on was headed for Queens. We would have much preferred going to Brooklyn. We have always liked Brooklyn and now we take an added interest in it on account of a letter that some Brooklyn man has written the Sunday Editor of THE NEW YORK HERALD saying that our stuff "is all bunk." So far as we have been able to ascertain this is the only man who has found out that we are writing this page in the HERALD every Sunday and in addition to that he is the only man we have found whose views concerning it coincide with our own. There are undoubtedly others but they have not had the courage to express themselves.

We wish this Brooklyn man would abandon his anonymity and make himself known to us. We would like to wring his hand in appreciation. As a matter of fact, we suffer more than he does. He has only to read the stuff, whereas we have not only to read it but write it also.

A story went the rounds, which is so old that it is new again, about a curtain speech made by George Bernard Shaw when "Man and Superman" was first produced. When the calls came for the author Mr. Shaw responded by thanking the audience for the outburst of applause and said he had no idea the play would be so well received, but since it had been he was gratified to learn that every one was pleased. A young man in the gallery cupped his hands over his mouth and yelled loudly:

"I think it's rotten."

"So do I," responded Mr. Shaw, looking up quickly toward him, "but what can you and I do against all these people?"

THE only real objection we have to the subway is the scenery. It is too monotonous. This is a defect which could be easily remedied. Suitable scenery could be painted on the sides of the tunnels. A competent artist could supply cows and chickens and pigs and trees and houses and thousands of other things equally as interesting and diverting. The unthinking will doubtless advance the argument that these things could not be seen because the trains move so rapidly. Not so. They could be painted so small as to give the idea of distance. Now that we come to think of it, we are suggesting a new field for advertising. We could even include in the scenery the fifty-seven varieties and the familiar wooden cows grazing on the painted lawn.

It is even possible to reverse the moving picture idea. Have stationary pictures and moving people. One could then witness the entire performance of "Ten Nights in a Turkish Bathroom" while travelling home after a hard day's work.

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WE have never been able to understand why everybody begins running immediately upon entering the subway stations. We have referred to this curious custom before and we intend hammering at it until we have received a satisfactory answer. Every New Yorker we have asked has said, "I don't know. We just do."

The father of a New York man came to visit him. They started one night after dinner to go to a theatre. They had lots of time to get there. The son hustled Father from train to train, going from local to express and back to local again, and finally upon emerging from the subway the son glanced at his watch.

"Pa, we saved a minute and a half that time," he said.

"That's good," replied the old gentleman; "now what are you going to do with it?"

The son didn't know, so they stood on the corner and watched the taxicabs go by until the time for the performance to begin.

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AT present we are passing the time as we ride on the subways in a little game we are going to turn into a distinct financial advantage a little later on, maybe when the Brooklyn man has succeeded in arousing sufficient indignation over our poor attempts at humor to send us up Broadway with a tin can striking against our shoe tops. The game we now play is to listen intently and with our utmost powers of concentration to what the conductor says when he announces what the next station will be and then to guess what he said. We are always totally at a loss as to our whereabouts when the conductor announces "Granger street." Every time we are fooled by it. We search our memory for something that sounds like "Granger street," but we never remotely imagine what our imperious friend is trying to say until the train slows up and the signs reveal that we have arrived at "Prince street."

For articulation and enunciation we will place our money on the subway conductor and give odds, even against the bespeckled, bewhiskered old gentleman who ranges back and forth under our window as we attempt to be humorous up in our room on Eighth avenue, calling "I ca clo-o-o-o," which any one would immediately recognize as "I pay cash for old clothes."

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THE joke about the whole thing is that New Yorkers, after hearing the subway conductors call the stations and after hearing the old clothes men, the fruit venders and the vegetable hucksters for years, go South and make fun of our negroes who announce what fish and vegetables they have for sale.

We were speaking about a new business we were going into when we are forced to. We propose to establish a new school of elocution. The head of the school will be an ex-subway conductor, and he will hold the chair of articulation. Our main professor will be our friend the old clothes man (if he still lives), and he will have the chair of enunciation, and the man who announces that he has oranges for sale at eight for a dime and twenty for a quarter will be awarded the chair of expression. We have a hurdy gurdy man who interrupted us one night when we were trying to find a suitable rhyme for "sigh" who will be in charge of the jazz department.

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ON the way up to Queens we got crowded and pushed and jammed until we almost made up our mind to leave the train. There was a girl who evidently wanted to sit down and she indicated this by practically sitting on our lap during most of the ride. She apologized three times and finally our native Southern courtesy arose and we gave her our seat rather than have her mash the crease out of our breeches.

It reminded us of the story of Jeremiah. One of those long winded preachers, the kind who speak two hours, and then say "And now in conclusion," which is a preface to another hour of oratory, undertook one very hot summer Sunday to enlighten his congregation about the Prophets of the Old Testament. Without informing his flock of what he had done he divided his sermon into two parts, the first dealing with the major prophets and the second with the minor prophets.

He gave the life story, so far as it is known, of each of the major prophets, interpreted their writings and informed the congregation under what circumstances they had made their prophecies.

"These then," he said, "are the major prophets. We have completed the list."

His hearers brightened up considerably and the men began reaching for their hats.

"And now," he continued, "what of the minor prophets? Who are they?"

The congregation sighed and settled down again while the clergyman thoroughly exhausted the subject, but there were more thoughts of cold dinners and of the sweltering midday than of prayerful concentration upon the lives and writings of the minor prophets.

"This," said the pastor in conclusion, "completes the list of minor prophets."

His auditors revived, mopped their faces and prepared for the Doxology. There could certainly be no more prophets.

"And now that we have heard of the major prophets," said the minister, "and now that we have considered the minor prophets, what about Jeremiah? Where is Jeremiah's piece?"

A man in the rear of the church reached for his hat and exclaimed:

"Jeremiah can have my place. I am going home."

Broadway's Landmarks of Gayety Fast Disappearing

Night Life Grows Prim and Proper With Fading of Oldtime Glories

By FRANK VREELAND.

NO other city in the world possesses a thoroughfare comparable to the Venetian Grand Canal of Manhattan, generally known as Broadway. No other street is quite so famous in various parts of the globe—this is said in all humility and with due respect to London's Piccadilly Circus. It has kept alive the name of the Rialto longer than Venice, the originator, did. In far off Tucson, Ariz., persons who never heard of Mayor Hylan and who don't care if they never do know all about the great artery he is supposed to control.

Broadway has been the magnet that has drawn so many of them to New York, the one street where they wanted to plant their feet and see life at its zippiest. The fishes in the Aquarium and the lions in the Bronx Zoo might die of neglect for all they cared. They knew that within the compass of that district which used to be known as the Tenderloin, and which now stretches from Thirty-third street to Columbus Circle, they could attain most of the pleasures, nice or naughty, known to man merely by walking straight ahead, keeping to the right and avoiding abrupt contact with automobiles.

Here the visitor from Punxsutawney, Mich., knew he could find as many hotels, theatres, cabarets, cafes, roof shows and other places of entertainment as he wished to pit his pocketbook and digestion against. London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna and other Continental centres all have such resorts, where Bacchus and banter rule, but they are spread out over a variable area and have to be tracked to their lair by the pleasure seeker just as he would pursue bargains in cabbages. In Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston and other leading American cities likewise the butter of joy is spread thin over the town.

But in good old Gotham all these titillations of the spirit line the one highway like velvet. In keeping with so much in New York, they were ready made and ready to hand. All the casual wayfarer had to do was to let the cops and the crowd shoo him along in one direction and he'd be bound to strike something he liked. Virtually it might be said that on Broadway enjoyment came right up and kissed him.

It might be said in the past, but it is no longer so true, that a visitor from another city who lands on Broadway falls right into the lap of merriment. Broadway is experiencing a change in character—it is being demagnetized. It is no longer the city's thermometer of pleasure; it is turning from booze to buttermilk. The Gay White Way is still white, but it is no longer so gay.

Alas! the Famous Street Is Surely Losing Zip

Stand at about 11:30 o'clock on any night upon the front steps of the Hotel Astor, which is the strategic key to Broadway, as so many Johnnies have discovered in the past. You will notice that the automobile traffic is all headed one way, downtown, and that there is no longer the colorful, shifting diversity and excitement of the old time streams of vehicles pouring in a delightful clutter from every direction and apparently all headed as if by magic for the same snarl in the traffic. Before these new, staid and coldly efficient regulations went into effect it was an adventure to cross Broadway, for one never knew, after safely gaining five yards by a run around the end of one stream of machine, what would suddenly tackle one from the opposite stream and throw one for a first down. Now you will observe how the torrent pouring in one direction is held up at regular intervals, and pedestrians, signalled to advance by sober faced policemen, cross the street without the tense expression on their countenances of Eliza crossing the ice.

You will perceive how the hotel is disappearing as one of the chief landmarks on Broadway, and how the theatres are now going up the side streets to flirt with the populace. Theatregoers who are streaming out of the playhouses no longer drop into a saloon or a cafe for something to take away the taste of the show. The saloons have gone, and the cafes have been made harmless by the police. Much to your astonishment, you will note that the cabarets themselves are beginning to empty about this time, and you are struck by the sudden cold thought: Can everybody on Broadway be going home before midnight?

They are, even from places that of yore used to stay open all night, and abruptly one of your cherished beliefs is shattered as you realize that a curfew, albeit an informal one, has actually been established on Broadway, by the merrymakers themselves. And you will sense as the hordes begin drifting out of the cabarets and the roof shows that they are no longer so jovial and hilarious, and that the wine of life is running pretty low in their veins. It is less than one-half of 1 per cent.

Then you will remark that where once the lordly lobster palace flashed supreme the automat has crept. And up from the lower regions of Manhattan, which the habitues of the Tenderloin were accustomed to regard as the business inferno of the city, where men merely toiled, comes stalking the business skyscraper, with efficiency experts and statistics in its wake. All about you gleam the signs of business offices, which are doing their best to turn Broadway into Broad street. You even miss the heaps of subway excavations that used to make Broadway so picturesque and provoke the injunction to see the American Alps first.

Now Pleasure Is Mild And Scattered Over City

The flamboyant electric signs still riot against the sky, and the sight seeing buses remain, emblem of the eternity of time. The baubles of pleasure are being scattered over the city—they are no longer wrapped up in one parcel called Broadway.

The Eighteenth Amendment has put the cabarets in the also ran class. A year ago most of the proprietors of these resorts expressed hopeful confidence that prohibition wouldn't affect their business, and "Cap" Churchill could even detect a strong bull market in the buying of soft drinks. But with the dwindling of the wine list, on which the girl and meal shows depend for their major profits through the handsome royalties paid to the great god Bacchus, the proprietors' optimism failed to run into the necessary five figures.

While the Saturday and Sunday night crowds are still heavy, on week days as a rule the patronage falls away to a shadow of itself, and the jazz band no longer is drowned out by the music of the popping corks. Several all night places have found their attendance after midnight growing altogether too select, so that it was hardly worth the effort of keeping the waiters awake until the usual early hours with only twenty couples wabbling about on the dance floor.

"Many persons are now going home who couldn't formerly find the latch with their key except by the light of the early dawn," said a *chasseur chez Maxim's* (bouncer). "They miss the masterful feeling of taking a champagne bottle by the nape of the neck. They have no stimulus to gayety—jazz merely worries them. And they no longer take a soubrette's voice at her own valuation, because the clinking of the glasses no longer distracts them.

"There's as much drinking going on as ever—probably more—but it's all being done in the sanctity of the home. With the police so active in drying up the town and making 2,000 arrests in three weeks people are afraid to take a drink in cafes, for fear it will have a kick that will land them in jail. So every one is becoming a devout exponent of the sentiment that there's no place like home, for that is where the hard stuff is."

Considine's, once a quiet retreat, where one could almost forget that one was married, made part of the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome. Of the snuggery that formerly nestled beside the Central Theatre, and that held up many a man even while he was on his way to meet the only one at a show, it might truly be said that "the lion and the lizard keep the courts where Jamshyd gloried and drank deep." For after yielding up its vital fluid it became for a while a dime museum, housing weird creatures who before that had been seen within its walls only in the visions of its frequenters. Following the freak show it became a conservatory of doughnuts. Now even the coffee and sinkers of this place have deserted Broadway—where the pace isn't fast enough for them. There is small need to expatiate brutally on the fact that chaste soda fountains now slumber on the bars of the Claridge and Murray's, for Broadway hung crepe on that fact some time ago.

No new restaurants of a Babylonian pretentiousness are opening on Broadway itself for the angels of righteousness of Overseer Voliva's army to fight in one of those bursts of purity that periodically get lost in New York. The demon of unrighteousness which they will have to combat in the eating line hereafter is represented by a swarm of pastry shops, which spring up almost with the morning dew. But the only demoralizing feature to be found in these have been green French confections, which some have displayed in their windows as proudly as though they had won World's Fair medals.

One such den of the Charlotte Russe and the Boston cream cake has veritably cut the ground from under the restaurant of Wallick's Hotel. The passing of that resort of syncopated feeding is an index of the thumbs down treatment being accorded the hotels. Here enters the second bogey, real estate, doing its share to turn the street of many lights into a Paradise Lost.

Once the Site for Hotels; None Are Building There Now

Increasing values for land have made it much more profitable to convert hotels into office buildings populated by film companies, clothing stores, barber shops, sheet music hotbeds and similar hives of an unaesthetic nature, rather than use them for golden inns where a man might sit and cultivate his soul by watching the girls pass. New hostelries are not being erected on the street; it simply isn't being done. The drift is westward—hotels crushed to earth shall rise again on Eighth avenue.

Broadway proper—admitting the applicability of the term—seems fated soon to be without one of those caravansaries where there is a charge for everything except wiping the feet on the mat. They are either being devoted to business purposes exclusively or else going in for the current craze to have their face done over.

The Claridge is reported to be willing to emulate the late Knickerbocker and be tempted into a life of commerce. So is the St. Regis, which, though not exactly facing on Manhattan's Mississippi of traffic, is still indisputably one of our little group of Tenderloin taverns.

The Astor was said to be on the verge of being revamped into an office building, but Fred Muschenheim renewed his lease and saved a place for the last stand of the Old Guard. Its front, however, is already being operated upon for the insertion of candy stores and other shops, and the Astor, once so proudly aloof from everything but romance, will now actually make a monthly turnover with its facade.

Skyscrapers are trifling with the hitherto conservative skyline of Broadway, which has been about the only conservative element of that boulevard. The Fiske Building at Fifty-seventh street is one of these new exclamation points emphasizing the inroads of commerce. Dr. John A. Harriss, Special Deputy Police Commissioner, is undertaking another pillar of Hercules in the same locality.

It is the greatly enhanced profit of property for merely mundane affairs that is elbowing art, as represented more or less nominally by the theatres, uptown and into a marginal existence in the side streets, away from the glare of the arcs under which they thrive best. It is not expected in real estate circles that there will be any more big playhouse frontages on Broadway like that of the Knickerbocker, and theatre row, that parallel of histrionic temples flinging thespian genius to the breeze which is so distinctive of Manhattan, is considered destined to pass into outer darkness. Daly's Theatre, that historic structure, which was once regarded as a daring venture because it was erected above the theatrical zone at Fourteenth street, has crumbled before the incoming tide of business and sprouted offices. The only new theatres on Broadway itself are palaces for the movies, which can afford almost anything, even a star's salary at her own estimation.

New Theatres Sprout in Side Streets Not in Broadway

The Shuberts, who are the leading manipulators of theatrical real estate around the district, are planning their future holdings in the vicinity of Forty-eighth street, and they'll be in the side streets, not competing with the haberdashery elysia on Main street. The spread of theatres straight uptown has been checked above Fiftieth street by the automobile agencies, standing like guardian angels at the portals of Columbus Circle and keeping too many members of the merry-merry from making flippant remarks on the cut of the Italian discoverer's face. Buildings in increasing numbers are being erected solely for the propagation of the limousine.

The new traffic regulations were brought about by the mad rush of touring cars to get somewhere instead of dawdling amiably along past Forty-second street, taking in the beauties of the scenery. In the same world shaking way the glittering pavilions where they sell you a limousine or a tractor with equal dexterity have developed automobile row instead of theatre row as the paramount feature of Broadway, replacing one kind of flivver with another.

"Even St. Nicholas Rink, which used to be taken for granted as part of the street," said one of the original charter members of the Broadway Alumni Association, "has practically dropped its loyalty to the White Way. It's given up ice skating, the particular feature that made it famous, for dancing, which can be done anywhere. Iceland still is devoted to steel runners and bumped noses, but in the summer it takes to automobiles. Nobody on the street nowadays seems able to keep away from the things.

"The old Central Park Riding Academy, once one of the attractions of the town, has passed and an office building is going up on the site, with a theatre for an appendix. Durland's Riding Academy has for several years been lost to the world as a moving picture studio. There's no place on earth outside Broadway where a horse is at such a discount, except maybe the North Pole. What they want is something to blow smoke in the cops' faces.

"The actors themselves don't seem to look upon Broadway so much now as their natural habitat. Most of the leading players live down at Great Neck and acquire a real complexion. And people have even taken to holding Sunday religious services in the Morosco, the Times Square and other theatres. My Godfrey! Ain't there no place in the country that's safe?"